**BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Budget Hearing Meeting of February 6, 2021
8:00 am**

**Present:** Committee Chairman Mike Vanni; Council President Patton, Charlie Malta, Monica Koudela, Natalie Antosh, Theresa Bisbee, and David Phares.

**Also present:** Mayor/Safety Director Regovich and Finance Director Benedict.

The meeting was called to order at 8:04 a.m. by Chairman Vanni.

 8:05 – 9:53 a.m.
Mayor Regovich and Finance Director Benedict provided an overall summary of the 2021 budget including the Special Revenue Funds. Notable items included: 2021 will be the last year we will collect PILOTS for the Shoreland Crossing TIF Project; the General Fund / EMS Fund split will remain at 55% General Fund and 45% EMS Fund in 2021. We should be ok at this level through 2022 as a result of the money we received through the CARES Act. We will need to continue to make another substantial transfer from the General Fund to the Earned Benefits Fund in the 4th Quarter this year as two employees will be retiring and six more are eligible. The Sewer Revenue Fund will need to be addressed shortly as the ending balance is projected to be low as a result of ongoing capital improvements throughout the City. The CARES Act provided the City with $2,305,698 which has allowed us to purchase many needed items that we would have been unable to do otherwise, as well as leave the General Fund with a projected healthy ending balance; however, it is important to note that we are still deficit spending which is not sustainable. We have agreed to hold a joint Budget and Finance Committee meeting in June to monitor where we are in relation to the budget.

10:08 – 10:27 a.m.
 Sean Brennan provided an overview of the proposed Building Department budget. Significant items included: the retiring of two part time employees and the hiring of a full time employee in 2020; the need for the department to purchase new software with a new software company; and agreeing to discuss the possibility of adjusting the salary of the Chief Housing and Zoning Inspector.

10:28 – 11:18 a.m.
 Acting Service Director (Mayor) Regovich provided an overview of the proposed Service Department budget. Two new cargo vans were purchased from the CARES Act money in 2020. Other notable items included: the possibility of hiring a cleaning company for the parks; the implementing of a tree program for the parks; proposed capital improvements of a skid steer loader, a pressure washer and a compressor; installing central air in Dudley; the; and the need for a new camera truck (this is not in the current budget) which is working but is dated. It was also noted that the Mayor would like a six month extension as Acting Service Director to ensure that he has enough time to get the department exactly where he would like it to be before hiring a permanent director.

11:31 a.m. – 12:17 p.m.
Chief Brian Turner provided an overview of the proposed Police Department budget. The department will be losing two officers this year and both will be replaced. Capital improvements/equipment; include new body armor, MDT computers for the cruisers; a Fingerprinting Scanning System, and the replacement of two new cruisers.

1:03 – 1:31 p.m.
Chief Joe Tennyson provided an overview of the proposed Fire Department budget. Notable items included: the purchase of a new ambulance in 2020 from the CARES Act money; the request to increase the funding for schooling and training in hopes to provide some continuity within the department; as well as hoping to keep our firefighters vested in the City; and the goal to hire three new firefighters per quarter. It was also brought to our attention that a new fire truck will need to be purchased within the next five to seven years as the current one is fifteen years old.

1:32 – 1:36 p.m.
Finance Director Benedict provided an overview of the Finance Department budget. One of the more notable items discussed was that the two new employees hired last year have been outstanding and have contributed greatly to the continued excellence of the overall department.

1:37 – 2:10 p.m.
Finance Director Benedict provided an overview of All Other Funds. It was noted that the significant increase in the Workmen’s Compensation rate that was expected and projected last year has come to fruition due to claims processed over the last two years. Discussion also centered on what information should and could be posted to the City website with all in agreement of deferring to the Law Director at this time before making a decision.

2:12 – 2:34 p.m.
 Julie Kless provided an overview of the Recreation Department and the Senior Center budgets. Notable items included: the repaving of Manry Park parking lot with $60,000 coming out of the General Fund and $65,000 from the Recreation Improvement Levy; and a new contract umpires account for the Instructional Youth Baseball Leagues. Regarding the Senior Center, it remains closed until April 1, 2021 where at that time Julie and the Mayor will discuss the possibility of when a re-opening can safely take place.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm.

 Respectfully submitted,

 Michael Vanni, Chairman

 Budget Committee, Willowick City Council